

The title is surrounded by several small, stylized bird illustrations in gold. There are birds in flight above the title, a bird perched on a branch to the left, and a bird in flight to the right. The text is in a gold, ornate, blackletter-style font.

Birds
Uncaged

AND
OTHER POEMS

By
BURTON L. COLLINS



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BIRDS UNCAGED

AND

OTHER POEMS

BY

BURTON L. COLLINS.

THE

Abbey Press

PUBLISHERS

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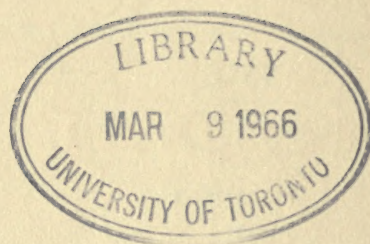
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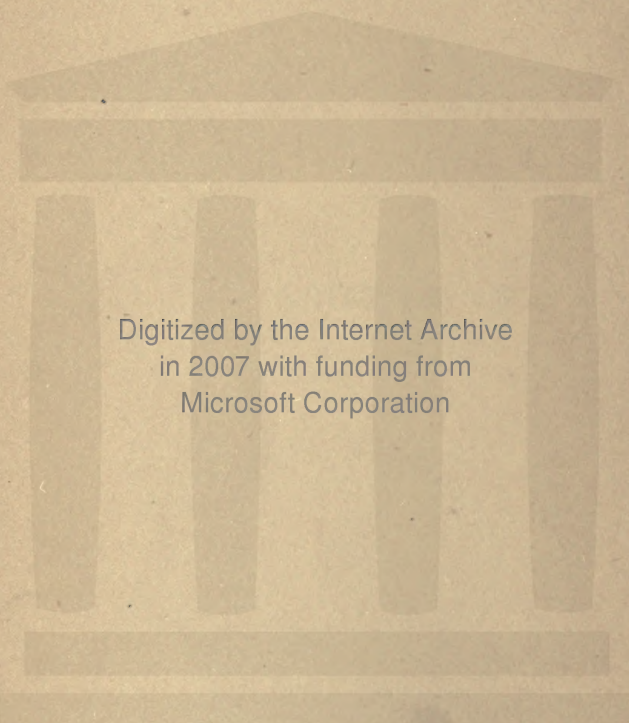
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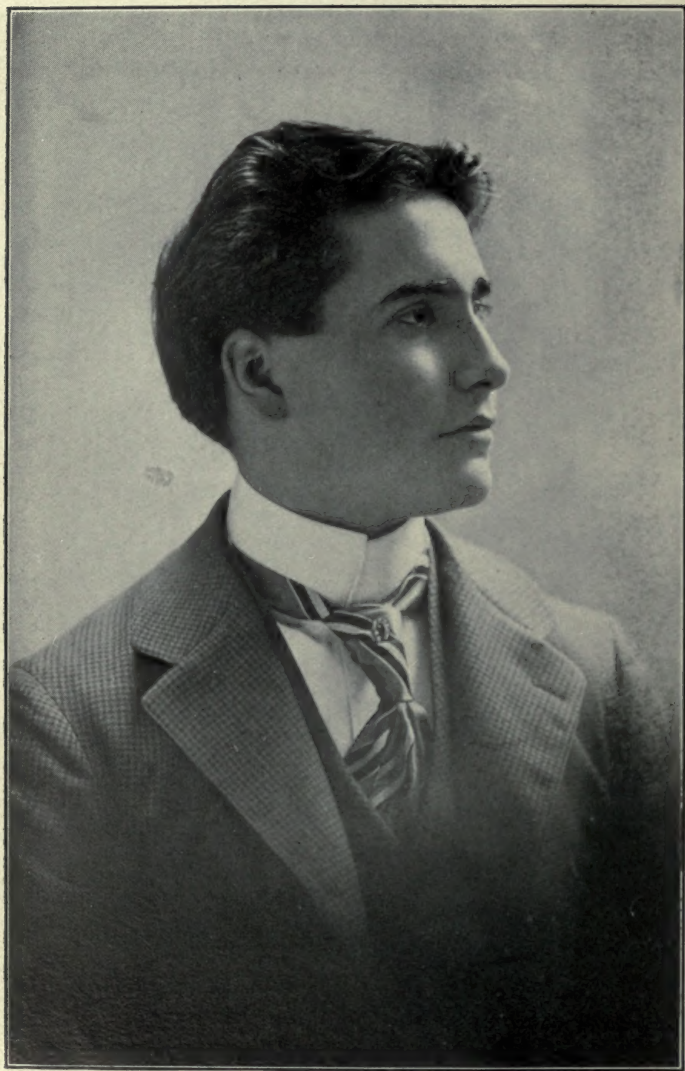
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To my Wife.



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BURTON L. COLLINS.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Samuel S. Collier was born in the town of Ramsey, Kings County, New York, in the year 1812, to English parents. His name is famous history through the Pyre, famous in history as the name of the shipwrecked the *Andromeda*. Mr. Collier received his early education in the schools of his native town, and later attended the County Academy at Haverhill. His education in literature was finished at Haverhill. He graduated a Latin in the year 1831, at the age of 19. He received his Harvard in 1834, when he was 22 years old.

THE PUBLISHED



BURTON L. COLLINS.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

BURTON L. COLLINS was born in the town of Berwick, Kings County, Nova Scotia, in the year 1880, of English parents. This town is distant twenty miles from Grand Pré, famous in history as the scene of the expulsion of the Acadians. Mr. Collins received his early instruction in the schools of his native town, and later attended the County Academy at Huntsville. His inclination in his studies was toward the classics. He manifested a taste for versification at a very tender age. He removed to Hartford in 1898, where he now resides.

THE PUBLISHERS.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
1. BIRDS UNCAGED.....	11
2. LIFE	13
3. THE SPRING OF POETRY.....	15
4. THE CREATOR.— <i>New York Evangelist</i> , 1900.....	17
5. TREASURE LOST.....	18
6. THE BUTTERFLY.....	20
7. THE NIGHT SONGSTER.....	21
8. THE MEADOW BAND.....	23
9. WHAT IS IT?.....	25
10. THE LOOM OF TIME.....	26
11. ABSENT AT ROLL-CALL.....	29
12. THE ASSURANCE OF IMMORTALITY. — <i>New York Evangelist</i> , 1900....	31
13. SEEN AT NIAGARA.....	32
14. THE SONG SPARROW.....	33
15. A GOAL OF HOPES.....	35
16. THERE IS NO REST.....	37
17. SWEET COMFORTERS.....	38
18. LINES TO THE AGED.....	39
19. THE USUAL AWAKENING.....	41
20. THE SYLVAN SINGER.— <i>Connecticut Magazine</i> , 1900..	43
21. THE DEAD HUSBANDMAN.....	44
22. PLAYED ON THE STAGE OF LIFE.....	47

	PAGE
23. WAR.....	49
24. EARLY JOYS.....	50
25. DROUGHT.....	51
26. A TRAGEDY.....	53
27. A TROUBLED QUESTIONER.....	55
28. WHEN WE WERE YOUNG.....	56
29. IN MAY.....	57
30. THE SUNSET.....	60
31. MY MOTHER'S WAY.....	61
32. EARTH'S EARLY VISITOR.....	63
33. BEACONS	64
34. THE BOBOLINK.....	65
35. PATHS.....	66
36. TALE OF THE SEA SPIRIT.....	67
37. A WAR SKETCH.....	69
38. FAME.— <i>Connecticut Magazine</i> , 1901..	71
39. BENEATH THE SURFACES.....	72
40. LAUNCHING OF THE OCEAN QUEEN.....	74
41. THE TOILERS	75
42. THE HERMIT'S TALE.....	76
43. THE YELLOW HAMMER.....	81
44. AN OBSERVATION.....	83
45. CENTURY SERIES—	
I. CENTURY BOOK.....	84
II. THE CLOSING CENTURY.....	86
III. THE COMING CENTURY.....	88
IV. DEATH OF KING CENTURY.....	90
V. OBSEQUIES OF THE CENTURY.....	93

Contents.

9

	PAGE
46. SAILOR SONG.....	94
47. TWO TYPES OF MEN..	97
48. GRANDPA'S LOVE-LETTERS...	98
49. A QUESTION.....	101
50. THERE COMES A TIME.....	102
51. A MYSTERY OF LIFE.....	105
52. THE PASSING OF A SOUL.....	106
53. SILENT WORKERS.....	108
54. THE OLD HOMESTEAD.....	109
55. THE NIGHTINGALE.....	114
56. SPRING BLOSSOMINGS.....	116
57. REVIEW YOUR LIFE.....	118
58. DAWN ON THE MOUNTAIN.....	119
59. THE POWER OF INFLUENCE.....	120
60. EARTH IS A SCHOOLROOM.....	121
61. THE WANDERING JEW.....	123
62. FAREWELLS.....	124
63. THE VETERANS OF LIFE.....	128
64. SPRING.....	130
65. AUTUMN.....	132
66. THE SPIDER.....	134
67. CHILDREN BY THE SEA.....	135
68. MY LIFE.....	136
69. FORGOTTEN.....	139
70. I MUST AWAY.....	140
71. BEREAVEMENT.....	141
72. VOICES.....	142

BIRDS UNCAGED.

BIRDS UNCAGED.

WITH nervous hand I open wide the doors,
And bid these birds inhabit haunts of men.
If some sad soul be gladdened by their strains,
Rich, am I then rewarded for my pains.

Some of these birds may have a mournful note,
And some like magpies prate of future ill.
Pray harm them not but send them swift
 awing.
I taught them each and all the songs they sing.

Though meaningless may seem the songs of
 some,
Perhaps there is a message for a soul.
I dare to hope that 'mongst them there may be
Some that sing songs of heavenly melody.

If such there are, no praise is justly mine.
I learned them of the Lyrists of the skies;
And only dared to tune to them these lyres,
When strong-impelled by heaven-kindled
fires.

I dare not keep what's given me to give,
Or hold these birds in cages of the mind.
So with a prayer I now release each one,
And trust that I my duty, well have done.

LIFE.

LIFE is like a flowing river,
Hastening to the boundless sea,
Oft 'tis long with devious turning,
Oft it flows through sands dim-burning;
Though it hugs its banks with yearning,
Yet with neither stop nor stay,
Swift it hastens on its way
To the ocean without shore,
Ocean of Eternity.

Starting small, a rivulet,
Soft it murmurs at our feet,
Tremblingly it onward flows,
Ever on, and larger grows,
'Till its volume no one knows.
No one can turn back its tide,
Ships like feathers on it ride
To the ocean without shore,
Ocean of Eternity.

Oft it flows down awful steeps,
 Gulfs of sorrow, pain and woe,
Oft through long dark caves it threads,
 Where no sun its glory sheds,
Where no living thing e'er treads,
 But 'tis ever onward going,
Ever flowing, ever flowing
 To that ocean without shore,
 Ocean of Eternity.

THE SPRING OF POETRY.

WHY was I favored by the Muses so
As to be led by them where few have trod,
Where issues the spring of poetry
Pure, clear and sparkling from the sod.

Filled to the brim they held a cup of gold,
And bade me drink what Homer drank of
yore,
I sipped the water of that spring
And eagerly I sought for more.

I rested on a flower laden bank,
The haunt of ancient poets this I found,
And though almost erased by time,
I saw their foot-prints on the ground.
The Muses gave to me a magic rod,
Around my brow bright garlands they entwined:
They bade me make the spring to flow
Into the paths of all mankind.

That there might be sweet flowers and restful
nooks,

Where men now faint and perish on hard
ways.

They left me in a blaze of light
To do this work through all my days.

THE CREATOR.

UNSEEN by men but known by wondrous
works,

In His bright presence angels veil their eyes,
The First, the Last, the Maker of all things
Eternal in the skies.

He shaped the graceful swallow's purple wings
That it might fly with ease from clime to clime,
He bade the Andes raise their cloud-capped
heads

And calmly gaze at time.

With skill omnipotent He made man's brain,
And bade thought on its million pathways run,
With power supreme He marked the unchang-
ing course

Of every star and sun.

His boundless love is felt by all that lives;
Like lilies opening sunward from the sod,
Let us unfold our hearts to Him who is
Creator, Father, God.

TREASURE LOST.

E'EN as a fragile vine strays o'er the wall
Of some great mansion stately, proud and tall,
And seeks with pain 'mid hardness and the
cold
To find a crevice where its feet may hold.

And failing shrivels, sinks to gloom and death,
Killed by the hardness and the wintry breath;
So, tremblingly, doth love's frail tender vine
Seek round a hard, cold heart to close entwine,

So falleth deathward, killed by alien air,
Killed by the hardness that repels it there.
Thus parts the heart with treasure more than
gold,
Rejects with haughty scorn a bliss untold.

E'en as kind Nature's vine with tender care
Might have made beautiful the walls so bare,

And when, by Time's stern hand the walls
were wrecked,
Might have the ruins with bright beauty
decked;

Ah, yes, perchance deceived the passer-by,
A garden not a ruin, he would descry;
Instead of desolation he would have seen
A haunt of birds and bowers of living green.

So might the vine of love have flourished well,
Had it been bidden with that heart to dwell,
And, bursting into bloom, made bright the
face;
And hid Time's ravage 'neath a love-born
grace.

THE BUTTERFLY.

A TANGIBLE dream, such thou dost seem
To me, as here I lie
With eyes half closed, 'mid clover blows,
Beneath the drowsy sky.

Zigzag afloat, the rudderless boat,
With sails that golden be,
The craft most fair in the sea of air,
So seemest thou to me.

THE NIGHT SONGSTER.

LOVER of twilight, gloom and solitude,
That singest when no other note is heard,
Think'st thou the song of any other bird
Compared with thine is musicless and rude ?

I seek thee as the night gloom deepens round,
Blending the trees in one dark, sombre mass ;
Perhaps I may by thee unknowing pass,
For thou hast ceased to utter any sound.

I halt beneath a wide-spread, Titan tree ;
The autumn glows of ages 'neath my feet,
My foot-falls dulled, no sound thine ear dost
greet,
For why then should'st thy voice so silent be ?

Keen-sensèd hermit of these lonely woods,
Thou hast discerned me with thy watchful
eyes,

I see thy wings, bat-like, flit 'cross the skies,
Seeking some depth where denser darkness
 broods.

I hear thy song repeated o'er and o'er,
From distant covert where securely hid,
And not mistaken think'st thou art rid
Of dread intruder seeking sylvan lore.
"Inquisitive, rude man," thou seem'st to say,
Measureless scorn, I feel, is in thy tone,
Too proud art thou to plead, "Leave me
 alone,"
So from thy haunts I hasten swift away.

THE MEADOW BAND.

HIE away with me this morning bright,
To where the birds sing day and night,
And flash and spark in plumage bright
The music has just begun.

'Tis here where rival singers meet
To join their notes at Nature's feet,
Their carols rise our souls to greet,
List to the harmony.

Those golden throats in silver bound,
Those stringéd harps of heavenly sound,
They charm our soul, our senses drown,
Angelic music rings.

Hear now the leader of the band,
He's just alit from distant strand,
He knows the songs of every land
And loves those songs to sing.

How can a thing that knows not God,
Whose origin is in the sod,
And though by every man out-lawed,
Sing songs of heavenly land ?

Sing on, O band of God's designing,
Though man thy music is declining,
God is above, his sun is shining,
Sing on, embodied joy.

WHAT IS IT?

A PASSION plays upon the hearts of men,
Its magic fingers touch the trembling strings,
Sometimes it plays a soft melodious air,
Sometimes it low and very sweetly sings.

Full many a heart is like a silent lyre,
That passion ne'er has waked to softly play,
And in the silence of the passing years,
It but too surely has rusted away.

Sometimes in early youth that passion wakes
To play its best and most melodious air,
And as the years go swiftly rolling on,
It smoothes the wrinkles from the brow of
care.

Sometimes in age when locks are snowy white,
That passion wakes and feebly tries to play,
It makes a melody within the heart,
But 'tis at best a sad and mournful lay.

THE LOOM OF TIME.

I stood beside the busy loom of time,
Perhaps 'twas in a dream,
And saw four fabrics woven by it there
Without an edge or seam.

No weary workman toiled with throbbing
brow,
No noise smote on my ear,
As with a brain the wondrous loom wrought
there
The fabrics of a year.

First Spring's pale brocade, delicate, appeared
To my delighted eyes,
A flock of homing swallows wrought thereon,
And bright winged butterflies.

Completed, it was folded out of sight.
The next was like a plain,
Figured upon it was a vine-clad slope,
And a field of waving grain.

A band of Graces grouped around a spring
 And cooled their dance-warm feet,
 They all were decked with poppies Cronus
 found
 Growing amid the wheat.

Delicious fruit hung purpling from low
 boughs;
 And in a cave close by,
 Was wine of vintage old that well might have
 Made heavy, Bacchus' eye.

The next appearing, pictured Autumn days,
 A gorgeous cloth of gold.
 And wrapped in flame stood trees resignedly,
 Like martyrs in days of old.

And Cranmer-like stretched out their sinewy
 arms,
 Which soon by fire were taken,
 But unlike Cranmer they had penned no words
 That told of creed forsaken.

It passed from view, a sight of awful glory.
 The next and last was white.
 But oh ! it was a magical creation,
 With gleaming pearls was bright.

Unseen hands 'broidered it with lace around,
Decked it with jewels rare,
So thin and fragile was the warp and woof
A breath might have spoiled it there.

I watched and yet it still more beauteous grew,
Till it scarcely real did seem;
Withdrawn by elfin hands, it passed away
Like the fabric of a dream.

ABSENT AT ROLL-CALL.

ABSENT at roll-call, comrades bow the head,
O'er braver leader tears were never shed,
We heard his name, on his cold pallid lips
Is written these dread words, "Mars in
eclipse."

I hear a voice like a joy-pealing bell,
"He's with us now forever to dwell,
He's joined our ranks, we are the armies dead,
We'll bind the victor's laurel round his head."

Bright flame-robed war sprites flashed like
bolts of Jove
Down from the mount, down from the heights
above,
When pierced he fell upon the fatal field,
They grouped around, his bloody corse to
shield.

Wide oped the doors, where they in council sit,
Whose Titan deeds have been in marble writ,

And as he entered, brothers claimed his hand,
Thus was he welcomed in the spirit land.

Oft hath he led us where the death-bolts
blazed,

Oft when we wavering stood, our deeds he
praised,

And when his, "On Men," rang like clarion
call,

We followed him and triumphed over all.

THE ASSURANCE OF IMMORTALITY.

I Musing stood beneath the autumn trees,
The forms I loved so had all passed away,
And as I thought upon my lonely state,
I heard a voice, as of an angel say,
“Why mournest thou? Look up into this
tree.”

Upon a twig I saw a silk form hang.
It solved the problem that holds nations dumb,
It told me that I need not feel a pang,
For God, who taught through instinct a low
worm,

To build a tomb from which to rise at last,
Would surely not leave here in death, for aye,
The image of Himself when life was past.

SEEN AT NIAGARA.

Just at the awful verge
A long branch grew bedewed by spray,
From it, a bird upon its hanging nest
Did lightly sway.

How came this little bird
To build in such a place its nest?
Was it to give to men conception of
What is true rest ?

Within the Father's hand,
We like unto her young ones lie,
And are unconscious of the power of ill,
Forever nigh.

THE SONG SPARROW.

LITTLE quaker of the forests,
 Yet with song so sweet and gay,
Glad we hail thee first in springtime
 And the last to go away.
In the bushes by the roadside,
 In the meadows by the streams,
Making music sweet and lively,
 Waking squirrels from their day dreams.
Now between thee and thy cousins
 Quick, a line we haste to draw;
They are greedy, songless monsters—
 Thou art keeper of bird-law.
When the men are in the hay-fields,
 O'er thy nest they often pass,
Which of wool and straw is builded,
 In the long and fragrant grass.
Iron wheels of the great mower
 Trample on the hidden nest,
In the nest "is death the gainer,"
 Parents soon find out the rest.

From a tree we hear of sorrow,
Such as mother hearts can know,
From her breast come wails of anguish,
Accents trembling, uttered low.

Oh, how tragic now an ending
To the parent's love and care!
Crushed and mangled are those offspring,
That the mower did not spare.
Yet to mother's heart comes comfort,
Soon the nest she builds again,
Now success crowns patient toiling,
And forgotten former pain.

Out of nest that's reconstructed,
Come the birdlings some bright day,
And when taught by anxious parents,
Gayly they all fly away.
Soon to seek a warmer climate
While here winter stern does reign,
First to come in early springtime,
Then we hear thy songs again.

Dressed in sombre gown so fitting,
This is why the name we give.
How we'd miss thee and thy music !
Long we wish thy kind to live.

'A GOAL OF HOPES.

Look ye away with me to-day,
To region, rich and old,
Where streams, I say, flow on alway,
Thro' channels choked with gold.

Supreme, sits Frost in region lost,
A sword of ice he wields,
White shrouds across his back are toss'd,
The gold from sight he shields.

Men rack their brains and give loose rein
To greed that's ill-concealed,
But naught they gain for toil and pain,
King Frost doth never yield.

Their boats are manned on warm sea sand,
Shore of their own country,
On deck they stand gaze on that strand,
Where they can never be.

Then angry turn; their mad hearts burn,
Sigh for the gold beyond,
No way they learn, but still they yearn,
They never do despond.

Some day they'll win, but not within
The reign of Frost King cold,
Tho' wrinkled his skin and his white hair thin
His days are yet untold.

THERE IS NO REST.

THERE is no rest in all the Universe.
No, not where matter is can rest be found,
No rest for man, his heart must ever toil,
No rest for sodden stone deep in the soil.

The tender flower is thrilled by million cells,
The air is ever moving, never still,
No rest for weary Earth's cloud-veilèd breast,
The weary Ocean moans, "No rest, no rest."

The diamond that lights up the queenly brow,
By motion is made still more beautiful,
From moving molecules the sun is bright
And floods the moon's dead hills with glorious
light.

This strange unrest is life in man or stone,
In dull sensed beast or in the radiant sun,
In glittering diamond or in fragile flower,
Wise men do say it is the Eternal Power.

SWEET COMFORTERS.

ABOVE earth's murky atmosphere the lark
Ascends swift sunward to the fields of light,
And tho' to eyes earth-dimmed is out of sight
Yet its glad songs come stealing down to men;
They pause in their hard toil and upward look,
Are gladdened by the singer's roundelay,
And with strange softness in their tones do say
To one another, "Hear that joyous lark."
Thus have I seen some sweet souls rise above
The base environment in which men live,
And soaring far above earth seek to give
To earth-tied toilers, comfort for their woe.

• LINES TO THE AGED.

YE who are old and weary, wrinkled and bent
 and gray,
Forget for a time that you've passed life's
 prime,
 Come back with me to-day.

We're going back, my friends, to the days of
 long ago
When we trod with delight through paths
 flower bright,
 Or coasted on the snow.

We're going back to the house, the school-
 house on the hill,
Where we used to meet and merrily greet,
 And of learning get our fill.

We'll see again the place so dear, where we
 were born,
Where mother sleeps, and the woodbine creeps,
 And the birds sing in the morn.

And kneeling by that grave where roses riot
free,

We'll utter the prayer with gray heads bare
That we learned at mother's knee.

We'll try to read the lines on memory's yellowed page,

Try to forget the toil and fret,
The miseries of age.

Oh ! let us ne'er return, amidst these old scenes
stay,

Till the angels fair come swift to bear
Our ransomed souls away.

THE USUAL AWAKENING.

A SCHOOLBOY sat at desk one day,
In an impatient mood,
He failed to see in school-work, pay,
Or use for mental food.

Thought he, "If I were by the lake
With my good fishing gear—"
The schoolboy gave his book a shake,
Dropped on his desk a tear.

The years rolled on and passed away;
The youth grew up apace;
At last he saw in school-work, pay,
'Twould help in life's hard race.

No more thought he of guns or brooks,
To games he gave wide berth;
He did his hunting in his books,
His spoil was of great worth.

At last the youth became a man,
Deep learned he and wise;
Admiring people now began
To laud him to the skies.

The fellow-students of his youth
All envious grouped around;
He sailed the sea of life, in truth,
They were in shallows bound.

THE SYLVAN SINGER.

HE poised upon a bough and overflowed with
song,

The song the Joys forbade him long to hold;
And as it flooded my entrancèd soul,
How common seemed the harps attuned for
praise or gold.

THE DEAD HUSBANDMAN.

A SILENCE strange broods o'er a homely scene :
A lowly cottage and the fields around.
All that we see suggests the missing one,
O'er whom we've heard the funeral dirges
sound :

O'er whom we've seen the new earth solemn
heaped,
While stricken wife and children wept aloud.
He who caressed those infants in their sleep,
Is lying still within his burial shroud.

They do not realize as yet their loss ;
They know that mamma cries, that some-
thing's wrong.

From baby lips is gone the carol sweet,
And from maturer lips the once glad song.

We saw them homeward wend their lonely
way,

Just having said their last good-bye to him ;
We see the wife with sad and tear-stained eyes
Look anxiously into the future dim.

The twittering of swallows 'neath the eaves,
Seems now a music that is sadly sweet.
Can they remember how at early dawn,
They winged their lightning way around
his feet ?

Can they remember how in early May,
A smile of welcoming lit up his face,
As they returning from the sunny South
Whirled o'er his head in many a frolic race ?

Here is the sickle which his horny hand
Swung in the field of waving, golden grain;
Here is the path he followed to the spring;
By it the tree, 'neath which he oft hath lain.

Here grows the vine which he with careful
hand
Trained high to grow above the doorway
stoop,
'Neath it have he and wife and children sat,
A happy and contented family group.

As now bereaved they sit beneath the vine,
While evening's sable mantles on them fall,
They think how Death's dark angel entered
here,
And took their loved one beyond recall.

Here lies the sod his plough hath lately turned,
Here is the lot prepared for winter rye;
He little thought that ere the snow should fall,
He'd tread the golden pathways of the sky.

See, through the trees the herd doth lowing
come,

Comes to await him at the daylight's close,
With grieving wonder in their great, brown
eyes,

They greet the stranger with a sniffing nose.

Quite well they knew the soft and kindly
touch

Of this man, who to all God made was kind,
Who dying just when life did seem most dear,
Left many loving hearts to grieve behind.

Oh, tell me! why was he thus stricken down?

None, none can answer but his Father, God,
He knows what is for His loved children best;
But yet our tears bedew the new-laid sod.

We must not question the divine decrees,

But we can chisel on yon upturned stone;
"Here lies one who lived guileless life and
pure,

He's gone to tread uncertain ways alone."

PLAYED ON THE STAGE OF LIFE.

The curtain rises o'er a shady lawn.
 Upon its carpet green,
 A boy is chasing butterflies
 Of bright and golden sheen.
The scene is changed! It is a battlefield.
 A man with flashing eye
 Leads forth his troops to battle stern,
 To fight and win, or die.

Here do we see in him a wondrous power,
A power to awe the world
And bring it humbly to his feet
With every war-flag furled.
His being trembles with a warrior's zeal,
Victory before him lies;
He feels he's born for mighty works,
His star shines in the skies.

The scene is changed! It is a mighty throne,
 Around, do monarchs kneel;

They know their power has come to
naught,
And terror all do feel.
An emperor parcels out their cherished
lands,
Their cities and their plains,
For he has drenched them all in blood
And now supreme he reigns.

The scene is changed! It is a chamber dim.
A woman weeping lies,
The story of a man's base deed
The subject of her cries.
A host of women pitying do gaze,
Their tears fall down like rain.
Napoleon, thou hast done this deed!
Thy star shall henceforth wane.

The scene is changed! It is a lonely isle
Midst the Atlantic's foam.
The greatest warrior of the world
Finds here a humble home.
The sable curtain falls o'er the last scene.
Napoleon's star has set;
Earth's ruler and the King of Kings
In realms above have met.

WAR.

Down from the height I gazed upon the dead
 strewn plain,

Where met the furious hosts in lamentable
 strife,

Each man with but one thought, to take his
 brother's life.

Thus has it always been since time's first course
 was run,

Thus will it always be till time exists no more,
While man is man, there must and always will
 be war.

EARLY JOYS.

I HEARD a strange bird singing
In early morning dawn,
But when the sun had risen,
I searched and found it gone.

I knew the bird departed
To cheer some lonely heart,
But with a feeling selfish,
I found it hard to part.

I felt a thrill of rapture,
When life to me was new,
Remembering it long after,
I found it vanished too.

DROUGHT.

'Twas dark and dreary, for Nature was weary,
The sun glare pained her eyes,
He had shone down, with never a frown,
From his burning zone in the skies.

She cried, "'Tis enough, I'm dry as snuff,
His warmth my patience tries;
For ere the dew has cooled me through
He comes, and it quickly dries.

"Above me he glowers. My withering flowers
Are crying for rain, sweet rain;
Never dreaming of dearth, I've embowered
the earth,
And soon 'twould be bare again.

"But the generous sea sent water to me,
By beams that round it played,
They drew it aloft, vap'ry and soft;
'Tis coming, though long delayed.

The heat was fearful, but the skies are tearful,
And soon will the raindrops come;
My flowers shall drink as they fall from the
brink
Of the rain-cloud, one by one.

A TRAGEDY.

SHE leaned upon his breast with slender hand
Close held by his, the one of firmer mould;
Her eye was wet, revealing unshed tears,
Thus was the tale of love, unspoken, told.

Soon we must part, was the unuttered thought
Of their fond hearts on this their parting
day,
Two hearts which had just found love's secret
out
And learned to recognize its magic sway.

A burst of tears, a long and sad farewell,
An anguished gaze o'er ocean's briny foam;
"Oh, ravaging waves, be kind to him for me."
Retraced her steps in sorrow to her home.

Upon the boundless billows where no man
Has certain mastery o'er them, who heave
him on,
Unbridled as wild horses at their play,
And he so helpless their white backs upon.

A moaning wind pulsates the glist'ning
shrouds,

It whistles, shrieks and then it dies away,
They hear the waves break on some unknown
shore,

Oh, God! 'tis dark, so dark, no sign of day.

The fated ship moves onward to her doom,

In vain are, o'er her sides, the anchors cast,
The sandy sea-bed no sure hold affords,

The ship is wrecked upon that shore at last.

'Tis morn; the sea-birds' rustling pinions beat,
And round the shore their eager cries re-
sound,

Where are they who last morn were full of life?
Ask of the waves which eager lap around.

The long, low swells creep guiltily to the beach.
What do they bring wrapped in their chill
embrace?

They bring a victim of their cruel play,
With death plain written on its ghastly face.

A white-clad form with wild, distracted eyes
Doth stand before the deep seas' sullen verge,
"Oh, cruel waves! thou didst take him, take
me,"

A broken heart seeks peace beneath the surge.

A TROUBLED QUESTIONER.

"AUTHOR of life, whence did I come
And whither shall I go?" would ask;
"My life as vapor is," Thou'st said,
Vapor within a clayey mask.

"A breath and I am gone,—but where?
A breath and I was made,—what for?
I cannot see what is behind,
I cannot see what is before.

"Yet I am here, I cannot doubt,
And Thou has told me to prepare,
But I am blind, I cannot see,
Prepare for what, and tell me where."

A low voice speaks from out the cloud,
"O troubled one, follow thou Me,
Thou seest thro' a glass that's dark,
Thou seekest what no angels see.

"Follow Me on, trust and believe,
Some day thou'lt see Me face to face,
Thou art on earth life's race to win,
Gird thou thy loins and win that race."

WHEN WE WERE YOUNG.

We're only free when we are young,
The earth seems ours beneath our feet,
And oh! its joys and pleasures sweet,
When we are young.

We're only rich when we are young,
Upon our cheeks the bloom of health,
We know not of our mine of wealth,
When we are young.

We're only pure when we are young,
The ungrown passions cannot sway,
Ah! pure and sinless is the day
When we are young.

We sigh for future years when young,
When old we sigh for youth again,
We'd like to be as we were then,
When we were young.

Ah, vain lament! unheeded cry!
The time is past and long gone by;
We think and think and deeply sigh,
Oh, to be young!

IN MAY.

In May there is a feeling in the air
Of young, pulsating life,
The flowers that are born to her
Know naught of tempest strife.

They know not age or age's withering.
Or the long summer's heat,
There rises from the nectared cups
A perfume very sweet.

In May the birds do have no family cares,
They then love carols sing,
Their songs are sweet the summer through,
But sweeter in the spring.

In May the nights are still, expectant like,
And webs lie on the grass,
They catch the gem-like drops of dew,
And sparkle as you pass.

In May the spruce uplifts its noble crown
Of purple cones on high,

It sways a proud, imperial form
Above the trees near by.

The cunning squirrels compute its massy
weight,
Throw it in fragments down,
And leave the forest monarch there
A king, without a crown.

In May the woodland's cool and shady banks
Give life to orchids sweet,
They lift their faces from the mould,
The wayfarer's eye to greet.

And clinging vines now shooting into life
Encircle stately trees,
And climbing up to sunlight, throw
Bright banners to the breeze.

In May the willows bear a precious load,
Throw gold-dust to the breeze,
And murmuring misers hoard it up;
They are the busy bees.

They take it from the heavy laden bags
Which leak at every pore,

Industriously they hoard it up
And then return for more.

In May the cherry, wild, in glistening white
Lights up the woodland green,
There, in her dark and sombre court
She is acknowledged queen.

The birds do eagerly anticipate,
Her change to robes of green,
Then in her tresses dark will be
Rubies where pearls have been.

In May the mayflower with its petals white
Perfumes the forest glades,
It blooms in hues of pink and white,
Like cheeks of country maids.

May is the month of sunshine and of flowers,
Of bright and happy days;
How soon it passes and is gone!
How rapt it holds our gaze!

The month of roses, now to claim our hearts,
Comes in with blushing grace,
But all its loveliness cannot
The mem'ries of May efface.

THE SUNSET.

SHIPS of flame in seas of fire,
Crafts unmanned and rudderless,
See the flames mount high and higher,
Oh, what wonder, awfulness!

See around the sun's low head
What a surf of rolling flame,
Will it ever burn out dead?
Worlds afire to this are tame.

Men stand like an awe-struck tribe,
Poets, painters have not been
And are not, who could describe
This incomparable scene.

MY MOTHER'S WAY.

AT my dear mother's knee when but a child,
I well remember the fond tones of love
In which she said, "Choose now, my son,
The path that leads to Heaven bright above.

"A few more years and you will be alone,
Alone upon the pathways of the world,
Remember that there is but one,
Tread it alone though darts of scorn be hurled.

"Oft will it lead up thorny, painful heights,
And oft across the burning desert sand,
But if you follow to the end
You'll dwell with me at last in Canaan's Land."

Wise words were these that came from her
 dear lips;
I followed on her pathway for a while,
But a broad flowery way I saw,
It quickly did my eager feet beguile.

I found the flowers had a noxious scent,
And serpents coiled beneath did at me hiss,
And looking far along its course
I found it led me o'er the dread abyss.

I quickly stopped and gazed around in fear,
"Turn back, turn back," I heard the Voices
say—
And led by One of thorn-pierced brow
Did find—no more to leave—my mother's
way.

EARTH'S EARLY VISITOR.

I STOOD within a lone, dark, cloud-filled vale,
When still the earth was childless, and the sea ;
Beneath my feet Vulcanian fires burned dim,
The parching heat pulled blinding up to me.

Rank gases filtered through the thickening
crust,

And stained with varied hues the vapor gray,
The souls of men to be came down from
Heaven,

And seeing the dread state fled swift away.

A voice that thrilled me said, "Let there be
light."

And lo, the mists did vanish from the earth,
And yellow sunshine bathed the new-born hills ;
I stood alone and saw the first Day's birth.

Awed and entranced on that great sight I
gazed,

Then revelled gladly in the glorious light,
I hurried swiftly on the homeward way,
Before the dread approach of black-browed
Night.

BEACONS.

A STRONG and steadfast pillar stands,
Upon a surge-swept rock,
It aids no mariner by day,
But bears the tempest shock.

When wild the storms do rage at night,
And rocks or shoals are nigh,
It shines a strong and steady light,
A signal in the sky.

Thus have I seen some great men stand,
Unseen, unheard by day
But patient, waiting in their place
Though numbed by wind and spray.

When dark the night came on the world,
And nations groped in fear,
They put a calm hand to the helm,
And bade all be of cheer.

And by the light of their great minds
All men were helped and blessed,
They stood like beacons in the storm,
Calm, brave and self-possessed.

THE BOBOLINK.

I WANDERED down where like a billowy sea
The meadow's wavy reaches fade to gray,
And knew that in the emerald depths must be
The sweetest singer that e'er greets the day.

I see him not but am content to wait
And silently enjoy his matchless strain;
To list for aye would be a pleasing fate,
For soon would vanish all earth's care and
pain.

Accept my humble praise, O lyrist sweet,
I dedicate these uncouth lines to thee;
Oh that as thou I might the morning greet,
And spend my days as happy and care free.

PATHS.

OUR old path is now forsaken,
Grown up high have weeds and grass;
And we stumble, fall quite often,
As we seek again to pass.

In this is contained a lesson,
Reader, take it well to heart,
When you have a good path chosen
Never from it then depart.

If you leave it vainly thinking
That you may return again,
You will find that you have blundered,
You will suffer bitter pain.

For where once you sped so swiftly,
Will be barriers grim and tall,
And instead of making progress,
You will bruised and bleeding fall.

TALE OF THE SEA SPIRIT.

I'VE trod the deep sea's coral floor,
And searched her palaces by night,
And in her deep ghost-haunted halls,
Seen mermaids revel in delight.

I've gazed upon her secret mines
Of silver and of flashing gold,
I've searched her guarded treasures
Of pearls and gems,—a wealth untold.

I've seen her swordsmen fiercely fight,
And fence, with skill unknown to men,
There is no place in all her depths,
Where my still feet have never been.

I've roved in warmth 'neath Arctic bergs,
I've seen the white bear fiercely dine,
And in the long, dark, silent night
Have seen Auroras brightly shine.

Beneath Pacific waves, I've seen
Gardens surpassing those of earth,
And coral statues in her parks,
To which no sculptor's hand gave birth.

Into secret museums I've peered,
Which are packed full as they can hold,
Of bones of fish long, long extinct,
And bags of curiously wrought gold.

The wonders all of that strange place,
'Twould tire me to fully tell.
The bell of Inchcape Rock is there,
I've heard its weird and ghostly knell,

No more a warning voice, it tolls
O'er graves of sailors tempest lost,
Here bones of countless mariners,
Are ceaseless round in eddies tossed.

Enough I've told to men of earth.
If they will come and visit me.
I'll show them wonders greater still,
Of the deep, wide, mysterious sea.

A WAR SKETCH.

A DESERT waste, a glowing sun o'erhead,
A range of mountains outlined 'gainst the sky,
Grim features of that bloody battlefield,
Where man doth meet his fellow man to die.

A puff of smoke, a cannon's awful roar,
A shrapnel shell loud screaming thro' the air;
Some mother's darling lying helpless now
With heart-blood reddening fast his golden
hair.

His life soon ebbs away into the sands,
A soldier for the right, he knows no fear;
Instead of mother's kiss and last embrace
A vulture's horrid crooning in his ear.

Pursuing the wily Boer, a troop sweeps by
And soon we hear the army's measured tread.
From yonder kopje blazes forth the fire,
Sings thro' the air the fatal hail of lead.

The night hath come, the white tents dot the
plain

Like throngs of phantoms born of evening mist,
The weary sentry plods along his way,
Sweet tempting sleep he knows he must resist.

See that commando climb in haste the hill,
To join with others in the mountain pass.
Hear in the distance that half-human cry,
Hyenas 'mongst unburied brave—alas.

'Tis useless now for all the world to say,
“ Was there not some one to suggest some plan
Other than war, to teach the stubborn Boer
That man must not be slave to fellow-man? ”

FAME.

ONE long accounted wise, met me upon a shore
Where moaning waves will toss forevermore;
I asked him what do men most prize and seek
to gain,
Across his features flashed a look of pain,
He knelt and for reply wrote on a passing
wave.

BENEATH THE SURFACES,

WHAT lies beneath the surfaces,
Of minds of those we daily meet?
If we could fathom to the depths,
What scenes our startled eye would greet!

Oh, fortunate that we scarce are
Diviners of our fellow's thought!
Frequent the disillusionings;
Our lives would be with misery fraught.

Unnumbered joys would gladden us,
To find a friend's true, honest worth;
And many a grief would pierce our hearts,
Finding of love in some a dearth.

Alas! the smiling faces we
Should find joined with poor broken hearts,
The heart of many a friend we'd find
A quiver holding poisoned darts.

We often wish to see that which
May cause us anguish deep, or joy,

'Neath many golden surfaces
Is found the basest of alloy.

'Neath many surfaces quite plain
There is much, better than would seem,
Oh, that we knew this as we might,
Much happier would be life's short dream.

That " all's not gold that glitters " is
An adage of the whitest truth,
To our scant thought of this is due
Some great mistakes of age and youth.

Like moths, we oft attracted are
To that which burns our eager wings,
And stern Experience alone
A helpful knowledge to us brings.

That things are not just what they seem,
We take a lifetime to discern,
And at the end like Socrates
We've only just begun to learn.

We find of all the gushing throng,
Our friends in number are but few,
A look beneath the surfaces
Would prove my words, alas, quite true.

THE LAUNCHING OF THE OCEAN QUEEN.

With gracious sweep she hurries on her way
And parts the waters waiting on the shore,
With ease she rules the breakers, foaming
white,
This is her realm, she can return no more.

Ye waves that bow submissive at her side,
Haste ye, haste ye, to distant climes away,
And herald it in all old Neptune's courts,
A queen is born unto the sea to-day.

Ye sea-nymphs that inhabit distant wastes,
Lift up your voices, gladly, sweetly cry,
"The Queen, she comes," and throw your
wreathes of pearls
Upon her path, as she goes proudly by.

THE TOILERS.

ONE night while travelling on a road strange
to my feet,
I found a multitude close fettered to the
ground;
The light from near-by mansions gleamed
bright o'er the place,
Revealed the white drawn look of many an
upturned face.
I heard no voice for all in that great throng
were dumb,
I turned and fled—swift on the backward way
did go,
I could not aid them or endure their silent woe.

THE HERMIT'S TALE.

ONCE I wandered in a forest,
Such as never man had seen;
Where the trees had ceased from living,
But were always fresh and green.

Where metallic leaves were tinkling
In the passing of the breeze,
Where no beast or bird was living,
On the ground or in the trees.

There were birds which here had nested
Till this wondrous chance came o'er.
They have all been changed to metal,
And their songs are heard no more.

Plainly saw I them above me,
But they were quite surely dead;
In the darkness 'midst the foliage,
Gleamed their flinty eyes of red.

They were perfect as old mummies,
Products of Egyptian art,

They were petrified from plumage
To the centre of the heart.

Some with wings outspread for flying,
Underwent the change to stone,
They have never moved a pinion,
While a thousand years have flown.

Long roamed deer in fear and trembling,
Through this woodland's dim lit ways,
They dared not because of hunters,
In the open fields to graze.

They now stand like sculptured statues,
Just from some great master's hand;
Danger from a hunter cannot
Move, as once, this silent band.

Wide and lustrous, soft, appealing,
Are their eyes to amber changed;
Oh, how light in form and motion
They have this great forest ranged.

There are streams which once rushed madly
On their courses to the sea,
They are smooth as northern ice-tracts,
And as hard as flint can be.

Lying on a glistening surface,
In the depths clear, crystalline,
I watched brilliant crystal fishes,
Flash with iridescent sheen.

With a lazy, fishy motion,
Waved their dainty fins below,
Oft they leapt for moths above them,
Coursing round with gaudy show.

Oft they swam around in glory,
Shone with a mysterious light;
While the fireflies whirling madly,
Lit to flames the forest night.

I have trodden on a pathway,
On most sorely blistered feet,
It was hard as hardest marble
Of an ancient Roman street.

Smooth and polished was the surface,
And the moon's weird shadow lay
Like a dead face staring upward
From a shroud of ghostly gray.

In the daytime, in some places
Of this lone and silent wood,

Gathered I of grapes large clusters,
But they were not fit for food.

They were changed to hardest metal,
Clicked like globes of polished glass,
Tho' they looked sweet, fresh and luscious,
As at distance I did pass.

Keep from thinking then I could not,
Thus it is with things of earth,
For to see them and possess them,
Is to know their trifling worth.

But their glitter tempts us sorely,
And with longing eyes we stand,
Then we climb and pluck them, but they
Turn to ashes in our hand.

How the silence did oppress me!
Clamped with iron seemed my soul!
Suddenly the sky o'erclouded,
Lightning flash and thunder roll.

Broke around me, and was welcome,
Welcome? yes, both sound and sight,
To my soul it was sweet music,
And I maddened with delight.

Loud the storm roared, and the brittle
Trees, like city walls did groan,
Like when 'gainst walls by huge engines
Batt'ring rams were heavy thrown.

Some crashed down with awful thunder,
Like great masts thick caked with ice;
Life was but a stake for demons,
And the devil shook the dice.

He did lose, and I am living,
Living like one from the dead;
When my tale I tell, men judge me
To be wrong in heart or head.

But a power resistless rules me,
And I have to tell it o'er
To the stranger when he cometh
Through my lonely cavern's door.

TO THE YELLOWHAMMER.

I know where your nest is in the tree,
I've seen your mate and young ones three,
I've seen you flash like a gleam of gold
When the curtains of night were backward
 rolled.

Away to the distant fields, away,
To search for food e'er breaks the day,
First to return to the hollow tree,
Where hungering wait the young ones three.

I know why you gallop instead of fly,
Why instead of song you have a cry,
A cry so piercing, loud and shrill,
That it echoes o'er wood and vale and hill.
A crescent of black adorns your breast,
In white and yellow and red you're dressed.
Some other hues your mate may see,
But these are all that are known to me.

Some scornfully call you a gaudy fop
Because you frequent the high tree top,

I don't believe it, I know you too well,
Your whole life history I could tell:
I've seen you wearily homeward winging,
And food to the young ones all day bringing,
No time dost thou spend in coquetry,
With a mate at home and a family.

Some day a farewell flash I'll behold,
When the leaves have turned to russet and
 gold;
You'll away to the South, and unconsciously
Leave an unknown friend who will lonesome
 be.

AN OBSERVATION.

TO-DAY I saw a child toil painfully up a slope,
That it might ride adown with ease and song;
And thus I thought it is in the great world
 of men,
They climb with pain and labor up the hills of
 life
That at their ease they may ride light adown.

THE CENTURY BOOK.

A WONDROUS volume this century book,
New from the press of time,
Filled with the deeds of mighty men,
Who live in every clime.

Some men, whose work was all men's gain,
Read not the closing page,
But their bright names are on the scroll,
That fadeth not with age.

Before these chapters science-bright,
Doth Magic stand in awe,
She sought no more to ply her trade,
When this great work she saw.

It reads of age-dark lands redeemed,
Made bright by God's great sun,
It speaks of Industry's new power,
And peaceful battles won.

Ye readers of this century book,
Unnumbered millions strong,
The Power of Past behind us lies,
Impelling us along.

We grieve the final page doth bear,
War's dark and bloody stain,
That numbers still feel in their hearts,
The universal pain.

Oh, let us each and all resolve
To work and faithful pray,
That these world-ills be quite unknown,
To men of future day.

That when they gaze upon the book,
Soon to be ours to fill,
They may in praising tones exclaim,
"These authors wrote full well."

THE CLOSING CENTURY.

As fades from mortal ken an aged sun,
So fades this century whose course is run,
It flickering gleams as swift it goes away,
And we exclaim how near is its last day.

With tearful eyes we utter a sad farewell,
As yonder watchman waits to toll its knell.
All now are dead who hailed its wondrous
 birth,
We last-born children know its priceless worth.

Its highest peaks some star-led beings trod,
And heard at heights, sublime, the voice of
 God;
Its depths are all explored and fully mined,
And trophies rich do faithful seekers find.

Its million paths are followed to the last,
Its fields are reaped; the harvest season's past,
And so, well spent of all its varied store
It passes, and quite soon will be no more.

Honor with song the last weak beams it sheds,
It shone once gloriously upon our heads,
And sing its requiem with slow, solemn lips,
As now it fades forever to eclipse.

THE COMING CENTURY.

Look! waiting world, toward the eastern sky,
A light appears as once o'er Bethlehem;
All men rejoice in its proud glittering ray,
It comes to light them on their weary way.

Arouse the sleeping trumpet and drum,
And hail its presence with a joyful noise,
Fair maidens, rise and tune the silent lyre,
Ye waiting shepherds, light the peaks with fire.

The great age of the world dawns now at last,
The one just gone prepared men for its sway,
Like orb, age-dim, compared with brilliant sun
Is it compared with this just now begun.

Weak infants sleeping in their mothers' arms,
Will grandly tread its elevated paths,
And men, o'er whom the hoarse-voiced throng
 now raves,
Will lie forgotten in forgotten graves.

Forgotten, no ! erase the appalling word,
They'll live for aye in work that's good or bad,
But sleep unenvious of eclipsing power,
They do their trifling deeds in their small hour.

Again I say, awake, tune every chord,
Chant the new song God-given to men to sing,
From nearing cloud I hear a mighty voice;
Listen, O world, it bids us all rejoice.

DEATH OF KING CENTURY.

His pulse doth feebly beat,
Cold are his hands and feet;
He knoweth no one now.
How peaceful is his brow,
 How pale and white
 It once shone bright
 With fire of youth:
 The light of truth
 Lit his bright eye.

Like kernels of the ear
One by one yellowed each year,
Like tassels of the corn
His locks are this last morn
 Of silvery sheen,
 Disordered seen
 As when a child
 He frolicked wild
 On wind swept hill.

Clouds heavy o'er his eyes
 Mass as in twilight skies,
 And hide the sinking orb,
 And every beam absorb,
 Laden with gold
 They break, unfold,
 Like sunset bright
 Followed by night.
 The king is dead.

“ A strong just king was he,
 Kinder than kings oft be,”
 The thronging mourners cry
 As they pass tearfully by,
 Give sad farewells,
 Ere toll the bells
 That tell the world,
 Death hath just hurl'd
 Him from his throne.

In his long peaceful reign,
 His subjects much did gain;
 With prudent, careful hand
 He so ruled every land,
 In house and shop,

Birds Uncaged.

Where grew the crop,
On earth and sea,
Where men might be
Was plenty found.

Take him to his long rest,
Fold his hands o'er his breast;
Another wears the crown
His aged hand laid down.
The hills may shake,
Dead men awake,
But he will sleep
'Mid shadows deep
For aye.

THE OBSEQUIES OF THE CENTURY.

HEAR that slow bell tolling, tolling,
Deep reverberations rolling,
Tears swift down men's cheeks are coursing,
For the king whom all loved dear
Lieth dead upon his bier.
And a bitter sound of sobbing,
Soundeth mournful in our ear.

No man's hand doth toll that bell,
Mortals cannot sound his knell,
But they to each other tell
Of his kindness and his pain,
How he sought that they might gain
All the benefits that come
Of a just and good king's reign.

In the funeral procession,
Joined in one are every nation,
Men of every rank and station
Stand as brothers round the place
Where he lieth with his race:
His good deeds will live forever,
Naught his record can efface.

SAILOR SONG.

THE sea is my home, the paths afoam
I follow with joy and song,
The north wind wakes, in rage he shakes,
And drives me swift along.

The host of waves are all my slaves,
They bow their white-capped heads,
The sun is bright, he's banished night,
His glorious beams he sheds.

The shoals are passed and from the masts
The sails flap gleefully,
My shining wake like a great sea-snake
Follows swift after me.

Oh ! I love the sea and sweet to me
Are its billows' surge and roll,
Its thundering roar where it strikes some shore,
Makes music in my soul.

I rule the deep where pirates sleep
Upon their heart's blood stain,
They restless toss amid the dross
They murdered men to gain.

As I sail along I hear the song
The Norsemen sang of old,
I see afar the great sand-bar,
Where lies the hidden gold.

I anchor awhile by a northern isle,
Where seals unnumbered be,
And hear them drop with a lazy plop,
Into the bergy sea.

Oh ! a sailor's life 'mid storm and strife,
Is joyous and thrilling and grand,
I cannot tell how some men dwell,
Upon earth's rocks and sand.

When I grow old and my days are told,
And my hair's like the sea-gull's wing,
Bury me low where the sea-fronds grow,
Where mermaids sweetly sing.

Carve me a tomb where coral walls loom,
And light the waters blue,

And I will pray on your dying day,
Men do the same by you.

Shed thou no tear on my wave built bier,
As to the grave I go,
My spirit shall roam o'er the briny foam,
Tho' my body lies below.

If you hail a ship, a phantom ship,
With a ghost for crew some day,
Know that 'tis I that pass you by;
I sail the seas away.

TWO TYPES OF MEN.

SOME men like butterflies skim o'er life's path,
And sip the nectar from its bright-hued flowers,
And hide in palaces when sudden pass
The chilling winds and icy tempered showers.

Some, gnarled by toil and chained down in the
dust,
Are quite unconscious of the joy of life,
They only know of struggle, grief and pain,
And all their days are passed in bitter strife.

These types of men are both lamentable,
Are they the victims of Design or Fate ?
No answer comes from them the world calls
wise,
We may not know this side of Heaven's Gate.

GRANDPA'S LOVE LETTERS.

WHILE searching in a chamber dim,
Where things are packed away,
Which have outlived their usefulness,
I found a box one day.

An odd affair of antique make,
Quite black with dust and age,
A pile of letters were within,
Which did my mind engage.

Some bore my grandpa's signature,
My grandma's were there too;
Together in a packet tied
With ribbon of faded blue.

With eagerness I scanned the lines;
While so engaged soft sleep,
Induced by warmness of the air,
Did o'er my senses creep.

My grandpapa, who old and weak
Sleeps in his easy chair,

In pride of youth beside me came,
And stood impatient there.

My grandmamma of drooping form,
And scant and snowy hair,
Now in the bloom of youth appeared,
A vision passing fair.

The tints upon her dimpled cheek
Would put peach-bloom to shame,
And glances lit her hazel eye
Which could have but one name.

Looks that are seen but at one time,
When youthful lovers meet,
And Chivalry with laurelled brow
Bends low at Beauty's feet,

And pleads that he go by her side
Along the flowery way,
And aid her up the steeps of life
When hair has turned to gray.

My grandpapa, with ardent gaze
Bent on her face, did stand
A moment, then knelt at her feet
And caught her trembling hand.

No more was I allowed to see
Of vision from the past,
A bright sunbeam came thro' the roof
And wakened me at last.

I looked around for the letters old,
So full of love notes sweet,
Like yellow, sere, autumnal leaves,
They lay about my feet.

I gathered them up carefully,
Placed all in grandpa's hands,
Which clasped in grandma's proved the
strength
Of love's bright golden bands.

A QUESTION.

BEFORE me lies a sheet, quite pure and white.
What shall I on its stainless surface write ?
Vain idle words to please the passing throng,
Or soothing words to cheer some one along
Who hath grown weary of life's grind and
din ?

Before me lies the stainless sheet of life.
What shall I do, mar it with selfish deeds and
strife,
Or shall it read of kindly works oft done,
Of burdened ones relieved, of battles won?
That I may pass with joy through Heaven's
Gate.

THERE COMES A TIME.

THERE comes a time to all of us,
When life is lone and drear,
And we in darkness find our way,
With trembling and with fear.

When we would lean upon an arm
Outstretched with tender grace,
And rest our weary eyes upon
A kind and loving face.

The voyage of life is stormy and rough,
Its burdens hard to bear;
We long to reach the haven of peace,
And rest in quiet there.

Now nearly at its shores we stop
And think upon the past,
When we so proudly spread our sails,
And climbed the swaying mast.

When we quite calm stood at the wheel,
When sleet fell cold at night,
And furious tempests loudly roared,
And nowhere was the light.

Save when the lightning's fitful flash
Revealed to us the shore,
And vanishing made then the night
Seem blacker than before.

Or, when in zigzags o'er the wave
Showed curling breakers white,
And proved how nearly came to wreck
Our bark in deepest night.

Was it the light of God's own eye
Flashed down as though in wrath,
But really to light up the way,
And point us out our path?

And thus it has most always been
Upon the voyage here,
God's kindness in His sternness was,
Let us His name revere.

We stand before Him with bowed heads,
And pardon-asking face,
And now as it has ever been,
We feel His love and grace.

We lay upon His bosom kind
Our own pain-stricken breast,
"Come unto me, my children, now,
And I will give you rest."

We hear His words so low and sweet
Uttered once long ago,
They shall forever sweetly ring
In mortal ears below.

We know that when we leave this scene
Of trouble and of care,
That we shall pass the golden gate
And reach the haven there.

We hope before the great white throne,
Guileless and pure to stand,
So that we may with ransomed ones,
Live in the Promised Land.

A MYSTERY OF LIFE.

SOME men seem destined to climb up
The mountain roads of life,
While some on level ways progress,
Know naught but ease and loveliness.

For some, the tempests and the pain,
And endless strife and care;
For some, continual happy days,
With ample wealth and friends to praise.

This is one of life's mysteries,
Deep and unfathomable.
Why it is thus we cannot know,
But it is best : God wills it so.

THE PASSING OF A SOUL.

HE stood midway 'twixt life and death,
His spirit panted to be free,
And yet delayed the parting breath,
Although his next that one might be.

His eyes half-opened, closed again,
He looked to heaven, glorious, fair,
He thought of wasted years of life,
He knew he could not enter there.

His mortal frame was racked by pain,
But greater far was spirit-grief,
He thought of Jesus on the cross,
He envied now the dying thief.

“Thou shalt with me in Paradise
Abide while endless ages roll,
Thou art forgiven all thy sin,
I lift the burden from thy soul.”

Oh blessed words! oh benison great!
Were they but spoken unto me,
I'd gladly hang upon the cross
Endure the pain and agony.

"Oh, Father in heaven, this soul forgive
If thou wilt take it from our ken,"
The man of God pleaded for him.
The sick one slowly roused again.

"Oh, Christ, in Thee my faith I put
Forgive, forgive, a life of sin."
The angel opened wide the gate,
And Jesus said, "Enter thou in."

SILENT WORKERS.

NOT the workers seen, but unseen,
Do the work of greatest worth,
Some in size quite microscopic
Build the bulwarks of the earth.

'Tis the silent, patient toilers
In the deep mysterious sea,
That are laying the foundations
Of the continents to be.

With their tools so weak and minute,
With their strength that is as naught,
They are working on a project
That is higher than our thought.

Everywhere are silent toilers,
In the air,—beneath our feet,
Plain their work, we can't mistake it,
Though the workers we ne'er meet.

'Tis a wondrous law of Nature;
Thus shall all her work be done,
By the noiseless, patient workers,
Till the race of time is run.

THE OLD HOMESTEAD.

THE house is old and tumbling down,
With ivy masses clinging round;
Those walls wherein my youth was spent
Are yawning now with many a rent.

The roof, the mosses now have claimed,
The bending rafters are so maimed
They scarce can bear the heavy weight
Of moss and thatch of ancient date.

The well, which once I viewed with dread
Because of what my mother said
Of awful things contained therein,
Seems smaller than it once had been.

A tide of memories o'er me swept,
As to its caving side I crept,
And gazed within upon the walls
Where seldom now the sunlight falls.

Dense clinging tendrils long and wet,
Spread o'er the sides a pale green net,
And graceful ferns wave to and fro
And hide the grewsome depths below.

I went to see the long sheep-fold,
The number of sheep I'd often told;
And when, by chance, one went astray
And was not found at close of day,

I used to search till shadows deep,
Upon my pathway seemed to creep,
Like forms of ghosts and wicked elves
I'd found in books on dusty shelves.

Oh ! how my boyish heart would quake,
When the dark woodland did awake
With howl of beast and note of bird;
Sounds that by day were never heard.

Remembered I, how once I'd found,
Quite weak and helpless on the ground,
A little lamb by mother's side,
Half hid by her lest harm betide.

And even scared of me she seemed,
Of harm from me she's never dreamed,

The Old Homestead.

III

But now this young one being born
She feared lest it from her be torn.

I raised it to my shoulder bare.
She watched me handle it with care,
Then reassured on homeward track
She ran but ever gazing back.

I walked along the river banks
From which I'd fished and given thanks
To Izaak Walton for his book
Of knowledge of the rod and hook.

Delightful book to boyish mind;
As scholar I was not behind,
I learned the way and where to fish,
And how to fry without a dish.

My memory made me hunger so :
I watched the speckled forms below,
And as I saw their bright sides shine,
Oh, how I longed for hook and line.

I longed to be a boy again
Without a care, an ache or pain;
To wander free o'er fields and streams
And dream again fond boyish dreams.

To feel my heart as light as air
And think the world all bright and fair,
To see the wild birds wheel and dart,
Oh happy being, boy thou art !

I wandered 'neath the orchar'd trees
In blossom now and bright with bees;
The mighty trunks long held my gaze,
How small they were in former days.

I found the tree of Astrachans,
From which my young and greedy hands
Would the half-ripened apples pick,
They quickly made me very sick.

My father then would get the cane
And I would feel a sudden pain.
I see my mother's tearful eyes,
My head upon her bosom lies.

I hear her voice, " Son, mind your pa
And always heed your kind mamma."
There is one spot which now I'll see,
No living soul shall go with me.

It is the place where mother lies,
Most sacred spot beneath the skies.

Here sleeps her earthly form of clay,
The spirit's gone the heavenly way.

The first in memory shall she be,
My mother ! she was all to me.
And next my father, stern, shall stand.
'Twas love that moved his oft hard hand.

'Twas " spare the rod and spoil the child,"
'Twas not his nature to be mild ;
He lies by mother in the ground,
O'er their dear graves shall flowers abound.

Though while in other lands I strayed,
They in their tombs were lowly laid ;
Yet I will the old home revere
And spend my life's calm evening here.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

I HEARD from out the woodlands
At midnight weird and still,
The song of a lone musician,
The wakeful whip-poor-will.

I stood in the dewy meadow
The calm moon riding high,
The river close beside me,
Noiselessly flowing by.

I thought as the shadows swiftly
Moved o'er as in a dream,
That life with its passing shadows
Is not unlike that stream.

That song gave me a heartache,
It jarred on thoughts of mine,
It seemed but one long discord,
No meaning, sense or rhyme.

The Nightingale.

- 115

He ceased at once, abruptly,
Killed by a secret foe,
From life of song and comfort
He fell down cold and low.

Though mournful was his singing,
He sang while others slept;
My heart grew sad, remorseful,
Unconsciously I wept.

The gray dawn broke around me,
My weary limbs I shook,
My midnight vigil ended
The homeward way I took.

SPRING BLOSSOMINGS.

THE trees are wreathed in beauty
Of blossoms pure and sweet,
Where'er we turn we see them,
Perfumes our senses greet.

In calm spring air awaving
Too beautiful to be still,
Their white-crowned heads are tossing,
On many a vale and hill.

All through the lonely winter
They braved the sleet and cold,
And not so much as sighing,
While others loud did scold.

Now decked in glist'ning beauty,
Reward has come at last,
They are all else outshining,
The winter trial is past.

In robes of glittering whiteness,
They charm the happy eye,
Remind us of the bright ones
Who live up in the sky.

To those who bear life's trials,
Reward shall come at last,
If patient in affliction,
Unmurmuring 'neath the blast.

And decked in glist'ning whiteness,
In God's gardens above,
Shall wave their palms of glory,
And know His name is love.

REVIEW YOUR LIFE.

REVIEW the pages of your life;
Mark well its storms, its trials and strife,
The lines that tell of toil and fret,
How much of it do you regret ?
Do you regret ?

Are deeds of love inscribed there,
Kind acts and words and faithful prayer,
Upon the page your eye has met,
If so, how much do you regret ?
Do you regret ?

Has sorrow's wave of blinding grief
Blurred with your tears full many a leaf ?
Your heart perhaps is bleeding yet,
You find it hard not to regret.
Not to regret.

All things do happen for our good,
Take this plain optimistic food,
If you can rightly interpret,
There's naught but sin that you'll regret,
That you'll regret.

DAWN ON THE MOUNTAINS.

THE golden beams of rising sun
Burst o'er the mountain, plain revealing
The shepherd huts in sheltered glens,
And gray clouds off to seaward stealing.

'Twas fair and beautiful to see
The rising sun that mount caressing,
Its arms of light and warmth and glory
The ills of night kindly redressing.

A fleecy cloud above was roving,
It shared the warm sun's generous smile,
Before the night had changed to morning,
It had come here to rest awhile.

Soon then each bird and insect wakened,
To fill the air with song and hum,
The whole sweet forest choir awoke,
Which in the chilly night was dumb.

Oh, charming is the morn's first waking,
The early matins, opening flowers,
The wreath of vapor o'er the streams,
The orchids in the shaded bowers !

THE POWER OF INFLUENCE.

LIKE a stone tossed into water,
Is our act for good or ill,
Swift the circles round it widen,
When we think that all is still.

Let us strive then to be careful
In our deeds through all our days,
Let us each use all our influence,
In the highest, holiest ways.

That we may the great plan further
Of our Teacher, Christ the Lord,
Doing thus, obey commandments
That are written in His word.

EARTH IS A SCHOOLROOM.

THE earth a crowded schoolroom is,
Its denizens are scholars all,
The small child struggling through its a b c's,
The bearded prophet, sage and tall.

They all are scholars in some class,
Each pupil takes his proper place;
Merit always determines precedence,
All are not equal in the race.

They all do learn some common truths,
All learn them much the same hard way,
There are some studies that are optional,
The term is short, 'tis life's brief day.

Yet some grow weary at their desks
And sigh for rest, a brief respite,
But the Great Teacher wills that they work on,
He knoweth well His way for them is right.

None can turn back to make review
Of work they have gone o'er in haste;
Some dally through their term and then look
back.

And groaning inly, see their fatal waste.

To all comes graduation day;
Happy are they who graduate,
They go to move in brighter, nobler spheres,
While those who fail, meet an ignoble fate.

THE WANDERING JEW.

I AM a wanderer on earth's weary ways,
I know not where at evening I may rest,
No heart beats soft for me in any breast,
I stand alone before the whole world's gaze.

Successive generations pass me by,
They learn my past and hurl their bitter scorn,
One who self-hated, age-bowed and forlorn
Seeks for sweet death but cannot, cannot die.

My path is thorny and my limbs are weak,
My sustenance comes on the waves of chance,
I search o'er land and ocean's wide expanse,
Death's welcome shape comes never tho' I seek.

The centuries like pyramids on me weigh,
My brain is weary with the lore of time,
Empires arose and flourished in many a clime,
But longer-lived I saw them all decay.

I saw my race dispersed by Roman power,
I heard my sentence, "Tarry till I come,"
So conscience-stricken, friendless and age-
dumb

I wait to meet Him at His chosen hour.

FAREWELLS.

ONE by one our comrades leave us,
Pass to other scenes away,
Do they pass to joy or sorrow ?
Do they pass to endless day ?

One by one they bid us farewell,
When their time doth come to go,
Sadly they look backward to us,
Falt'ring are their steps and slow.

Leave our lives a lone Sahara,
Drifting sands sweep to and fro,
Burying our most cherished objects,
Heedless that we loved them so.

Hard ! so hard ! The cool oasis
That may shelter us to-day,
May be buried deep to-morrow,
From our sight gone then away.

Sitting in the twilight pond'ring
As the shadows dance and wave,
All can think of some much loved one
Resting in the silent grave.

All can call to mind the voice of
Some dear one, whose voice tho' still,
Seems to call in accents tender
From the height of Zion's hill,

Bidding us be kind and loving
To the ones now by our side,
Lest these may be just as they were,
Hurried quickly o'er the tide.

Oft Death's summons comes so quickly,
We have no time for good-bye,
But we know that we shall greet them
In the happy by and bye.

Piercing pangs of sorrow wound us,
Blinding griefs do make us dumb,
And we live and suffer mutely,
Till thro' Christ we overcome.

Sad but sweet our lives are to us,
Though we suffer, yet we stay,

Dreading much to pass the portals
And toward the river stray.

Earthly friends must sometimes leave us,
Surely shall our hearts be torn,
Not to-day, then sure to-morrow,
Shall we have good cause to mourn.

Not a home but there is vacant
Some room which was occupied,
And a chair there is that's empty,
Close by every fireside.

In this life both pain and pleasure,
Mingle in the cup we drink,
Let us hold it firm and quaff it,
None but cowards ever shrink.

None but cowards ever dash it,
Spilled and broken at their feet,
Then in silence and confusion,
At the bar a stern Judge meet.

Bravely, bravely fight Life's battles,
Drink its cup of joy or woe,
Joy alone is yours in Heaven,
Joy the victors only know.

There awaiting you are loved ones,
Quick they haste you now to greet,
And with love they take your trophies,
Laying them at Jesus' feet.

Hark, the burst of angel rapture !
He has spoken, " Thou'st well done,
Crown him, crown him, my disciple,
With the crown which he has won.

" Clothe him in a robe of whiteness,
Such as victors only wear,
He has fought his way to glory,
Palms of victory he shall bear."

THE VETERANS OF LIFE.

WE are old and weary and wan,
We are battle-scarred and seamed,
We have made a reality
What men of old have dreamed.

With lame and lingering feet,
Behind the ranks of life
We limp and think how once
We were foremost in the strife.

Our paths are shadowed and lone,
Our laurels are faded and sere,
Our locks are hoar and thin,
And often falls the tear.

For the young in their pride and strength,
In their robust ardent prime,
Forget us warriors old,
Us veterans of time.

Forget our battles won
Of which they reaped the gain,
Forget that we gave to them
What cost us toil and pain.

But our hope is in Him who was
When suns and stars were not;
He doth remember us,
We are honored in His thought.

And at the last roll-call,
Each will be in his place,
A conqueror thro' Him
Who saved us by His grace.

SPRING.

THE nearing sun shines warmer on our land,
The violets bloom where late the snow has
 been,
Unshackled water-courses murmur low,
Amongst the trees returning birds are seen.

Their morning matins sound sweet in our ears
That long have been attuned to winter's blast;
A thousand things emerge from dark retreats,
And all rejoice that spring has come at last.

Above our heads we see swift arrowy forms,
With joy we realize the swallow's here,
Beneath our eaves these feathered architects
Will soon their brown adobe-like houses rear.

Carolling children wander in the woods,
To gather starry trilliums, orchids bright,
Invade in bands the deep recesses there,
Where scarcely ever penetrates the light.

Across the fertile fields the sower strides,
Scattering the seed with care on every hand;
And glad to be released from all restraint,
The herds do wander o'er the pasture land.

All this is proof of what we cannot doubt;
Again has come the resurrection day,
Forms that seemed dead arise to joyous life,
And forces long benumbed resume their sway.

AUTUMN.

THE thistle-down floats on the air of morn,
The bluejay's note is heard among the trees,
From the near farmhouse shrilly sounds the
 horn,
The swallows have departed and the bees.

Along the forest paths lie drifts of leaves
That rival in their hues the jester's coat,
The nut-trees are alive with mery thieves,
Sweet are the songs from many a joyful throat.

The reapers like intrepid scouts are seen
Attacking regiments of ripened maize,
The ranks fall fast before the sickles keen,
Happy tho' toilsome pass the harvest days.

A dreamy haze obscures the distant hills,
A hush of plenty broods o'er all the land,
Each want of man, Nature gen'rously fills,
Rich are the treasures from her bounteous
 hand.

Of all the seasons I like autumn best ;
But every season brings its joy and pain,
But happy am I when pass all the rest,
And autumn mild and fruitful comes again.

THE SPIDER.

ANCHORED on the seas of dawn
Is a boat with silken sails,
They are decked with diamonds bright.
When the sun comes 'twill be gone.

It is manned by a pirate bold,
He has pillaged all the night,
Now he furls his shining sails,
Passes down into the hold.

There his wretched captives be
Bound with chains that he has wrought,
All are held firm and secure,
And can never more be free.

CHILDREN BY THE SEA.

CHILDREN by the sea,
Playing in the sands,
Watching ships sail off
To the distant lands;
Throwing tiny pebbles
Into passing waves,
Seeing them sink swiftly
Into sudden graves;
Building many castles,
To be washed away
When the tide comes in
At the close of day.
We are little children,
Weak and foolish we,
Playing on the shore
Of eternity.

MY LIFE.

My life is like a great lone sea
Unfathomed, endless, wide,
With a great silence in its depths,
Above which, is the tide.

Above, the tempests often rule,
And waves of trouble beat
Except where Christ's calm "Peace be still"
Makes silence round my feet.

My buoyant hopes like ships at sea,
Are oft wrecked in its flow,
Remains of thousand joys and loves
Lie on the rocks below.

Entombed in coral sepulchres,
They whiten in the brine,
Yet many signs on them remain
To prove that they were mine.

Though always on the foremost wave,
I often peer below,

And see their dim, indistinct forms
Move restless to and fro.

With old familiar beckonings,
Which are, alas, quite vain,
They fondly reach from out their tombs:
The sight gives bitter pain.

"Oh take, oh take us back again!
We once lived in your heart.
We joys and loves of long ago
We'll come no more to part."

They are a cruel mockery,
I withdraw tearful eyes
And fix them on a prospect calm,
My peaceful evening skies.

My harbor, over which the sun
Sends floods of liquid gold,
Lies tranquil in the evening's calm,
Its gates are backward rolled.

'Twas grand to feel the waves of life,
Strong, surging to and fro,
They are now all but sunk to rest,
'Tis well that this is so,

The tide of life will rise again,
Will rise to ebb no more,
Will flow above the harbor-bar,
Its storms will then be o'er.

The heavenly magnet drawing it,
Will bid it upward rise—
Will gently, calmly draw it on
Forever to the skies.

FORGOTTEN.

FORGOTTEN: word that's written o'er the
graves

Of the unnumbered millions that are dead.

We seek to gain what men do prize as wealth,

We strive to enter Fame's scant peopled tower,

That we may be esteemed as great, and then

Forgotten.

With eager feet we climb the stony steeps,

To carve our names upon the cliffs of time,

In vain is all our starving and our pain,

Like children's castles on the wave-washed
sands

Are we: Time's wave sweeps o'er and then we

are

Forgotten.

I MUST AWAY.

I MUST away, where light asway
Music-mad throistles sing,
Where like soft bells down jagged fells,
Sound rills from mountain springs.

I must away, a thousand voices call,
For how can I resist ?
As little as a bird thrilled through with joy
From singing can desist.

I must away, sun-bright the day,
How blue the cloudless sky !
A thousand things on tinted wings,
Pass rapturously by.

I must away, where 'neath the woods' dark
skirt,
The forest children play ;
Where tender orchids delicately grow,
And gorgeous hues display.

I must away, I dare not stay,
For nature bids me go
From dust and heat of city street,
To her cool banks ablow.

BEREAVEMENT.

'NEATH the shade of yonder roof-tree,
Sits a mother, lone and sad,
Mourning for her only darling,
Only loved one that she had.

In the darkness, no one near her,
Gracious God, Thou who art near,
Heal the heart that's almost broken,
Comfort her beside the bier.

Thou who knowest all and art all,
Thou who giv'st and tak'st away,
Speak some word to this poor mother,
Who has lost her all to-day.

Fain would she look up and trust Thee,
Thy will, not her own, be done.
Hold her hand and lead her gently,
Till life's battle she has won.

"When at last the days are gathered
Into Thy great judgment one,"
Lead her to her heavenly mansion,
Lead her to her angel son.

VOICES.

THE voices that most greatly influence us,
That gladden or make sad our numbered days,
Are never heard by ear however keen,
They enter by the soul's intricate ways.

They are not heard from loud, coarse babbling
tongues,
They never can be known through mortal
speech,
They pass mysteriously from soul to soul,
And manifold the lessons that they teach.

Unfelt as growth, they build our natures up,
To structures grand to last enduringly,
They toil unceasingly to attain this end,
Although unconscious of it we may be.

We wait in vain where lilies sweetly group
Like white-robed angels in the heavenly choirs,
No words we hear, and yet they all do speak,
And thrill our heart-chords like celestial lyres.

The sea, the great sad sea, doth have a voice;
Not the strange jargon of untiring waves,
That wash our feet with all the abjectness
And fearful mien of snowy-turbaned slaves.

We hardly realize it has a voice,
We wonder why we feel so lone and sad,
The sea's sad heart converses with our hearts,
And so we cannot feel light, gay or glad.

The mountain peak, that lifts its head sublime,
Speaks not in language audible to our ears,
But yet we feel its message in our souls,
And strive to upward climb through all life's
years.

These faltering words that close this final page,
Will hardly help men climb a weary hill,
But I dare hope they'll hear the voices sweet,
That moved me to obey the Eternal Will.

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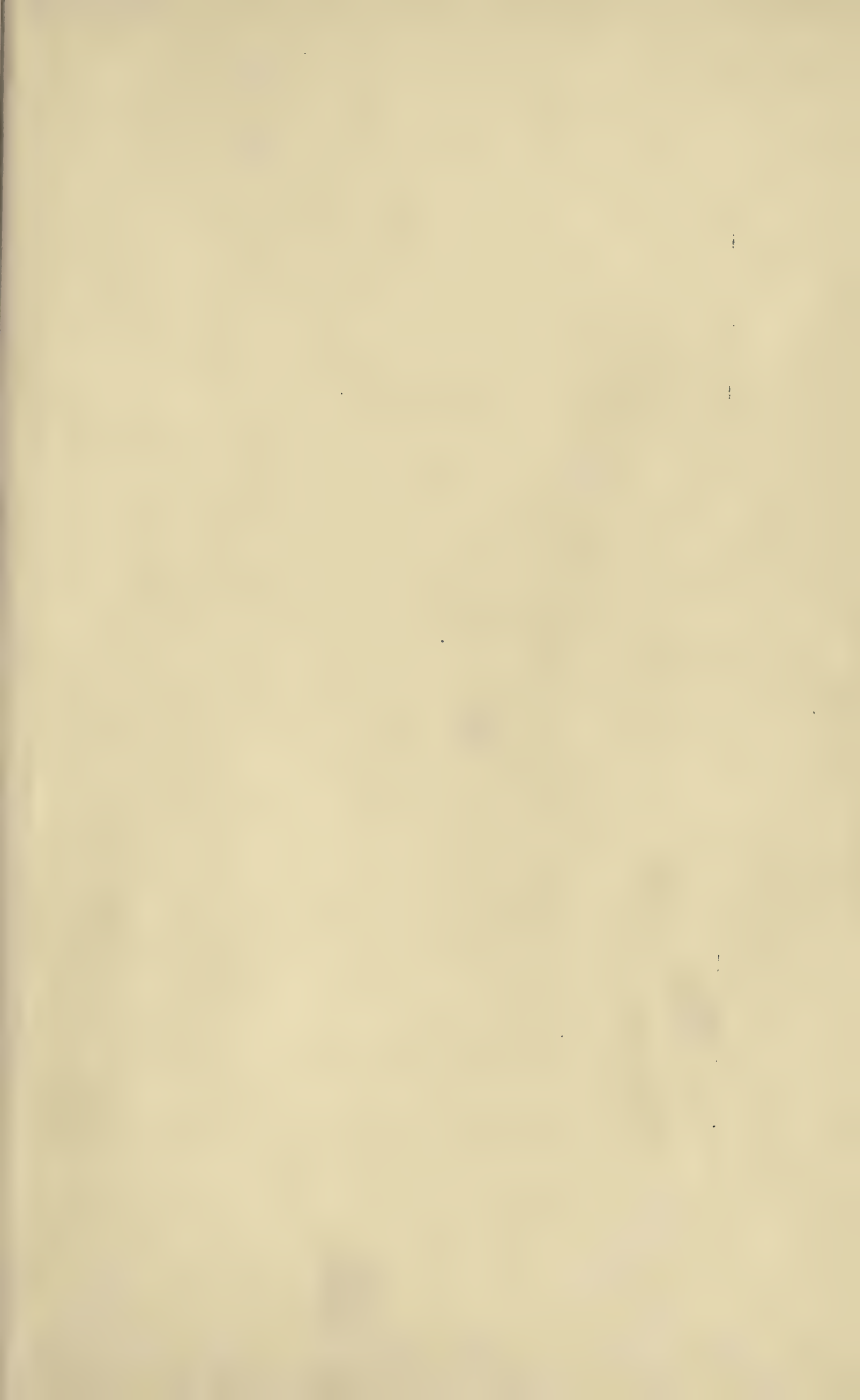
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